

Appl. No.: 09/827,127
Amendment Dated March 15, 2005
Reply to Office Action of December 16, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for consideration of the pending Claims. Claims 20 through 42 are currently pending. Claims 20 through 24 and 31 through 36 are rejected as identically disclosed in Lorenz et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,310,882. Claims 28 through 30 and 40 through 42 are rejected as unpatentable in view of Lorenz, considered alone, and Claims 25 through 27 and 37 through 39 are rejected as unpatentable in view of Lorenz considered in combination with Do et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,052,276.

As described below, there are several patentable attributes of the Claims that are not disclosed or suggested by the Lorenz reference, considered alone or in combination with the Do reference.

First, the connection configuration via the data communication link of the invention is not symmetrical. As claimed, the components positioned on both sides of the data communication link are not identical. Specifically, the components on one side of the data communication link include at least one circuit card and at least one interface transfer card, while the components on another side of the data communication link include at least one switched network card and at least one interface card, wherein the circuit card is not equivalent to the interface card and the interface transfer card is not equivalent to the switched network card.

The Lorenz reference teaches a symmetrical structure via the link (40) for connecting one group of stations (3) with another group of stations (3'). Specifically, the components on one side of the link (40) include the stations (3), the media modules (14), and the high speed media module (140), while the components on another side of the link (40) include the stations (3'), the media modules (14'), and the high speed media module (140'), wherein the respective components on both sides are equivalent to each other.

Appl. No.: 09/827,127

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Second, neither of the claimed interface transfer cards are equivalent to the port means (19) in Lorenz patent. As shown on column 4, lines 45-59 of Lorenz, the port means (19) is used to perform optical-electric conversion (and vice versa), serial-parallel conversion (and vice versa), includes a media access control (MAC), and corresponds to all the media modules (4,4'). In comparison, the recited interface transfer card is used to interface with a particular circuit card and the recited interface card is used to interface with a particular switched network card.

Third, the function of the claimed method/system is different from that of Lorenz.

Specifically, the present invention is applied to ATM exchanges, routers, and other communication products positioned at the midway point of a network and serves to carry out data exchange between different network devices. On the contrary, the device in Lorenz is a computer network concentrator which is positioned at a terminating location of a network and directly connected to network terminals, and serves to carry out data exchange between identical network terminals.

In summary, Lorenz fails to teach or suggest the solution defined in the Claims. The passive base card disclosed in Do does nothing to cure the deficiencies of Lorenz. Therefore, Applicant submits that the claimed invention is patentable over the cited references and that all pending prior art rejections have been overcome.

In view of the remarks made above, Applicant submits that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance and an indication of allowability of the claims is solicited.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required

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therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit
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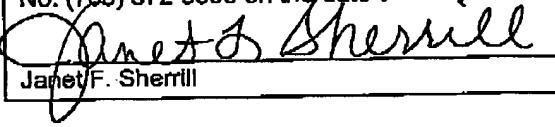
Respectfully submitted,


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Janet F. Sherrill

March 15, 2005

Date